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**MILLARD NORTH HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NEBRASKA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (November 29, 2012) — In its 28th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Isaac Aakre of Millard North High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Nebraska Football Player of the Year. Aakre is the fifth Gatorade Nebraska Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Millard North High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Aakre as Nebraska's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Aakre joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Wes Welker (1999-00, Heritage Hall HS, Okla.), Terrell Suggs (1999-00, Hamilton HS, Ariz.), Anquan Boldin (1998-99, Pahokee HS, Fla.) and Jerome Bettis (1989-90, Mackenzie HS, Mich.).

The 5-foot-11, 185-pound senior quarterback led the Mustangs (13-0) to the Class A state championship this season. A returning First Team All-Nebraska selection as named by the Omaha World-Herald, Aakre rushed for a Class A record 2,295 yards and 27 touchdowns on 357 carries. He also completed 34-of-56 attempts for 507 yards and six scores. In four Class A state playoff games, Aakre ran for 751 yards and five touchdowns on 107 carries in addition to completing 17-of-25 passes for 265 yards and three scores. He concluded his career with 110 rushing yards on 22 carries while completing 6-of-8 passes for 106 passing yards and both Millard North touchdowns in a 17-14 victory against Omaha North in the Class A state title game.

Also an accomplished guitarist and choir singer, Aakre has maintained a B average in the classroom. In addition to donating his time as a youth football instructor, he has volunteered locally on behalf of his church, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, The Siena/Francis House homeless shelter, Ron Brown's FreedMen ministry conference and The Nebraska Miss Amazing Pageant.

"Everyone knows Isaac Aakre's carrying the ball, and it doesn't matter," said Tom Olson, head coach of rival Norfolk High. "He just forces his will."

Aakre remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

The Gatorade Player of the Year program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade high school sports leadership team in partnership with USA TODAY High School Sports, which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Aakre joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Football Players of the Year Drew Ott (2011-12, Giltner High School), Tyson Broekemeier (2010-11, Aurora High School), Bronson Marsh (2009-10, Millard South), Tyrone Sellers (2008-09, McCook High School) and Baker Steinkuhler (2007-08, Lincoln Southwest) among the state's list of former award winners.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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